

Pre-Roman Italy, Republican Rome, and the Roman Empire (1000 BCE- 31 BCE)

Italy in the Bronze Age was a land full of diverse cultures and languages, home to several fascinating peoples, such as the Etruscans, the Latins, the Samnites, and others, where the Greeks had founded several cities, with Mediterranean-wide contacts ranging from the Aegean to Egypt and North West Africa. This impressive diversity was gradually absorbed into an expanding Roman state through a complex combination of alliances, conquest and incorporation into partial or fully-fledged Roman citizenship. This political eco-system was then essential for Rome to create its Mediterranean Empire.

One could look at these different ancient societies and cultures in their own right, or study them in relation to one another, and their place in the wider world. The Etruscans, for example, not only developed an impressively rich urban culture, they also represent one of the most fascinating examples of local reception of early Greek culture, and had significant contacts with the Phoenicians. They can be studied through a rich body of inscriptions and substantial material remains.

A further issue is the integration of the Italic peoples within a Roman state. Certainly, to the Romans Italy was a special place. The Roman statesman and literary figure Cato the Elder, for example, wrote a book called the *Origins* on Roman history, which started precisely with the origins of Rome and of the other Italic peoples, and subsequently presented the narrative of imperial conquest. The repression of Bacchic rites in 186 BCE is also presented by extant primary sources as part of the relationship between Rome and Italy. The relationship between Rome and Italy remained a key issue in the history of the whole Roman republic, and was still so at the time of Augustus, whose closest collaborators were for the most part members of local elites of Italian towns.

Another angle would be studying Roman imperialism in the various parts of the Mediterranean area and Europe that were part of the empire. In many of these places, from Britain to Spain, the near East and North Africa, there are rich documentary sources that can be used to study a variety of phenomena from different perspectives.

Finally, this period is notable for the history of Rome, which manages to forge the political, institutional and cultural instruments necessary to the conquest of the Empire, and impose its rule across the Mediterranean. We have a huge variety of fascinating sources for this period, from a history of Rome written by Polybius, a Greek aristocrat hostage in Rome in the second century BCE, to the memoirs of Julius Caesar and treatises and orations written by Cicero, rich material remains and a growing body of inscriptions.

I am happy to discuss ideas on projects for Master dissertations concerning any related topic from a variety of historical and archaeological perspectives.